



DIRECTIONS

From the intersection of
Route 195 and Route 89,
head east on Route 89
for 3.4 miles;
parking is on right.

Suggested Park Activities

-  Hiking
-  Picnicking
-  Fishing
-  X-C Skiing

Prohibited Park Activities

Unleashed Dogs
Mountain / Motor Biking
Camping / Camp Fires
Horseback Riding
Walking on the Agricultural Field



**Mansfield
Parks &
Recreation**

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www.mansfieldct.org/parksandpreserves/
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US Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

*For up-to-date trail information or to download maps
click on www.mansfieldct.org/trailguides/*

Mt. Hope Park

Mansfield, CT

Mt Hope Park is a 35-acre property featuring 1300 feet of frontage along the Mt. Hope River. The park is part of an old riverside farm dating back to the late 1700's. The only farming activity that remains is a hay crop in the south field, which is cut by a local farmer each summer. The town acquired Mt. Hope Park in 1999 with assistance from the Ct DEP's Open Space Watershed and Land Acquisition Grant Program.



trail guide

There are 1.06 miles of hiking trails within the park boundaries. The trails are blazed in white and wind through the following points of interest:

1. **Stone Walls** - The stone wall at the park entrance was recently built. Those that border the southern edge of the property and cross the interior of the park are part of the original farmstead dating back to the 1700's.
2. **Woodland** - This area is a second-growth woodland that was once cleared for farming and later allowed to re-establish. Before 1999 it was used as a firewood lot.

3. **Agricultural Fields** - Please do not walk on this working hay field cut each summer by a local farmer. Cross-country skiing in the winter is allowed.
4. **Mt. Hope River I** - This river's headwaters are in Ashford and it flows through the park on its way to Lake Naubesatuck to the south. Stocked by the Ct DEP, it provides excellent trout fishing.
5. **Tree Nursery Area** - These rows of trees remain from a former ornamental plant nursery. Watch for flowering trees in the spring, such as Bradford Pear and dogwood.

6. **Beaver Ingenuity** - Resident beavers have attempted to raise the water level in the pond by blocking the outflow pipe in the earthen dam. The cage-like structure at the end of the pipe, visible when the water is low, prevents the beavers from blocking the pipe.
7. **Evergreen Lot** - This gridded planting of hemlocks may have been part of the former nursery operations. The small clearing in the center of the dense block now creates an interesting outdoor room.
8. **Mt. Hope River II** - At this point along the river, enjoy a peaceful scene of the Mt. Laurel on the opposite banks and the play of filtered light across the rocky river bottom.
9. **Glacial Esker** - The sudden steep bank signals a unique geologic landform known as an "esker". The narrow ridge was formed by glacial stream deposits and forms a natural divide between the pond and the river.
10. **Pond View West** - Stop to enjoy a scenic view. Across the pond lies a meadow, and beyond is the original farmhouse built in the late 1700's.
11. **Pond View North** - Enjoy another scenic view of the pond, which was formed by damming a swamp in the 1960's. When the water is low, the tree stumps are visible. Water lilies grow on the shallow bottom and cover the surface with heart-shaped leaves and white flowers.
12. **Bedrock Outcrop** - The woodlands surrounding this rock have not been cleared because this rock outcropping made it difficult to cultivate or mow the area.
13. **Stream Crossing** - This is one of two seasonal streams that cross this low-lying wetland and enter the pond. This bridge is one of several park projects contributed by local Eagle Scouts.
14. **Wetland Boardwalk** - On this boardwalk, look for a rich diversity of wetland plants such as jack-in-the-pulpit, skunk cabbage, and red maple.
15. **Pond View East** - From the bench by the pond enjoy the view of the pond and the esker. Keep your eyes open for wildlife.
16. **Old Field Management** - This open area was once cleared for farming and has since been maintained as a meadow through periodic mowing and selected removal of woody/ invasive plant species. Enjoy picnicking and playing in the mowed lawn area.
17. **Dairy Barn Remnants** - The paved floor of the Whitehouse family's 1920's dairy barn can be glimpsed from this point on the trail. The adjacent meadow area was formerly used as a pasture.
18. **Evergreen Edge** - The western edge of the park along Route 89 is crossed by two streams. This pine woodlands provides yet another habitat among the park's diverse environments.

